

Approved by EQAC, April 9, 2003

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
COUNTY OF FAIRFAX
SUMMARY OF THE ANNUAL PUBLIC HEARING
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (EQAC)**

DATE: February 20, 2003

MEMBERS PRESENT

Robert McLaren
Frank Crandall
John Foust
George Lamb
Gabe Markisohn
Rachel Rifkind

STAFF

Noel Kaplan
Kambiz Agazi

SPEAKERS

Patrick Shea
Kevin Munroe (Reston Association)
Diana Saccone (Reston Association)
Susan Bartram (McLean Hunt Estates)
Joe Chudzik (Lorton Federation of Civic Associations)
Tom Gause
Joe Ragan
Steve Hurley (Public Forum)
George Lehnigk
Jim Davis (Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations, Environment and Recreation Committee)

OTHERS PRESENT

Todd Bolton
Linda Boone
Laura Grape
Robert Kohnke
Michael Wing

2002/3 Annual Public Hearing

The only item on the agenda was the annual public hearing, which had been rescheduled from December, 2002 due to inclement weather.

The public hearing commenced at 7:30 P.M. in Conference Rooms 2 and 3 of the Fairfax County Government Center. There were ten speakers, eight of whom provided written testimony or background information (Susan Bartram provided written comments in December, 2002 as well as a handout at the February 20 meeting). In addition, Marianne Mooney, President of the Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, provided written comments in December, 2002. Written materials are included in an attachment to this summary.

Chairman McLaren welcomed all those in attendance and made a number of announcements. He then called the first speaker.

Patrick Shea (speaking as an individual) introduced himself as a resident of the area near the intersection of Lee Highway and the Fairfax County Parkway and read his written statement, which is attached. He focused his comments on his concerns with a development project underway near this intersection and cited this project as an example of the need for better, more environmentally sensitive development methods. After Mr. Shea's presentation, there was some discussion between Mr. Gause and Mr. Shea.

Kevin Munroe (Reston Association) presented information from his written statement, which is attached. His statement focused on the environmental efforts that have been, and are being, pursued by the Association. He also stressed the need for EQAC and the County to coordinate with local communities when developing lighting guidelines or policies. Chairman McLaren recommended that the Reston Association coordinate its environmental inventory efforts with the County's Park Authority. He also recommended that the Association contribute information to EQAC for inclusion in the next Annual Report. Mr. Kaplan noted that the Association has contributed to the Annual Report each year. Mr. Lamb referenced Mr. Munroe's comments regarding the Reston Association's bird counts and asked if any trends were evident. Mr. Munroe replied that the effort is just getting started and that there are not yet enough data to establish trends. He did note, however, that there appears to be a reduction in forest interior species and that the number of House Finches has decreased due to the effects of an infection.

Diana Saccone (Reston Association) focused her comments (attached) on Reston's watershed management planning efforts. She noted that the Association has recently completed a comprehensive watershed management plan for Reston and discussed issues associated with this initiative. She also

discussed Reston Association partnerships with Fairfax County, the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Virginia Department of Forestry. She recommended that the County incorporate innovative practices into the Public Facilities Manual and expressed concern about the implications of a proposed amendment to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance on stream restoration projects. Chairman McLaren referenced a stream restoration project along Snakeden Branch that was mentioned by Ms. Saccone and expressed interest in the outcome of this project. Mr. Crandall noted that several EQAC members were working with the Planning Commission's Environment Committee on revisions to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance; he stated that EQAC is sensitive to the concerns raised by Ms. Saccone.

Susan Bartram (McLean Hunt Estates) focused her comments on the proposed development of athletic fields by the Fairfax County Park Authority at Spring Hill Park. She provided an overview of the park and expressed her specific concerns about the process through which the Park Authority is planning recreational facilities for the park. She reviewed information from her handout, stressing her view that passive recreation and preservation opportunities are being ignored in favor of active recreation. Following her presentation, the Council discussed the implications that the forthcoming revisions to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance may have on this site. Mr. Crandall expressed his concern about the Park Authority's focus and the need to consider the site comprehensively (as opposed to just the vacant land). Ms. Bartram's handout, as well as her testimony from December, 2002, are attached.

Joe Chudzik (Lorton Federation of Civic Associations) read from a prepared statement, which is attached. His comments focused on a number of issues relevant to the southern portion of Fairfax County, including air quality issues associated with the I-95 Energy/Resource Recovery Facility, stream protection, stormwater management, groundwater monitoring at the I-95 Landfill, water quality concerns associated with the Rainwater Landfill, hazardous materials disposal, illegal dumping, illegal signs, and the County's Spot Blight Abatement Program.

Tom Gause (speaking as an individual) read from a prepared statement, which is attached. His comments addressed global warming (and actions that can be taken to reduce carbon dioxide emissions), the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement (and nutrient reduction goals in particular), a recommendation for a "Friends of Fairfax County Wetlands" group, and biodiversity. He included taped excerpts from panel discussions (summarized in his comments) during his presentation. He closed by commending EQAC for its Annual Report on the Environment.

Joe Ragan (speaking as an individual) expressed concerns about a septic waste disposal site on County park land at the intersection of Colvin Mill Run Road and Route 7. He presented a handout (attached) summarizing issues associated with this site as well as a discussion of the history of the site, current issues associated with the site, mitigation efforts that the County is pursuing to improve safety,

and his conclusions and recommendation. He expressed concerns about unsupervised dumping at this site and homeland security implications. He recommended that the site be closed. Notes from Mr. Ragan's presentation are attached. After Mr. Ragan's presentation, Mr. Crandall took issue with Mr. Ragan's recommendation and expressed concern that, if this site was to be closed, septage would need to be hauled greater distances to be disposed, which would, in his view, have negative implications.

Steve Hurley (Public Forum) addressed concerns about stormwater runoff associated with new development. He referenced an 18-lot infill development project adjacent to his neighborhood, noting that the project had resulted in stream erosion below the outfall for the site. He stressed the need for better outfall designs in order to avoid the problems that he was seeing with this particular development project. Chairman McLaren referenced past EQAC recommendations related to this issue and noted that these recommendations led to a Policy Plan amendment supporting stream protection and restoration. He added that a committee formed to evaluate regional ponds and related stormwater management issues had been looking at a number of related issues. Dr. Agazi and Chairman McLaren suggested that Mr. Hurley pursue possible violations of County requirements through the Site Inspections and/or Code Enforcement offices.

George Lehnigk (speaking as an individual) introduced himself as a resident of Oakton. He expressed his support for EQAC's air quality recommendations and provided his comments on localized air quality issues from the perspective of a bicycle commuter. He noted that, during his daily bicycle commute, air quality is not an issue along Chain Bridge Road but becomes an issue in townhouse subdivisions, particularly during the winter months when cars idle for long periods of time. He also characterized air quality as being bad at the Vienna Metrorail station, especially in the vicinity of idling buses. He recommended that the buses stop idling their engines and that something be done to get people to stop idling their engines in parking lots. He suggested the establishment of an anti-idling law or related legislation.

Jim Davis (Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations, Environment and Recreation Committee) read from a prepared statement, which is attached. His comments focused on three issues: (1) cumulative impacts of development projects that, individually, are considered to have no significant impact; (2) allowed encroachments into Resource Protection Areas and floodplains; and (3) notification to citizens of water quality impairments. With respect to cumulative impacts, he referenced several public sector (e.g., Fort Belvoir) and private sector projects in the Mount Vernon District and added concerns about increased impervious cover associated with infill development projects. With respect to floodplains and Resource Protection Areas, he recommended softer engineering techniques in these areas and stronger limitations on filling in floodplains. He added his view that there is a need for a more coordinated approach to stormwater management (e.g., small regional ponds) and he supported continued funding of stormwater master planning efforts. With regard to citizen notifications, he expressed concern that the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality had identified PCB

impairment of several bodies of water in and near the Mount Vernon District and stressed the need for the public to be aware of this issue. After Mr. Davis' presentation, Chairman McLaren discussed a particular site in the Mount Vernon District that Mr. Davis identified as a possible opportunity for a regional pond retrofit, noting that the Comprehensive Plan calls for the restoration of the stream valley in this area. Dr. Agazi noted that Mr. Davis had referenced the imminence of sanctions because of air quality violations; he stated that the region would be submitting State Implementation Plans in the near future for the purpose of avoiding such sanctions. He disagreed with the contention that sanctions are imminent. Chairman McLaren noted that he had been following issues associated with development at Fort Belvoir.

Chairman McLaren thanked the speakers and the audience for attending the public hearing.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 P.M.